(b) No, Sir.

(c) The State-wise number of BPL families was initially based on the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 applied to the population projections of 1995. With effect from 1.12.2000, the base was shifted to the population projection of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000. The number of BPL families in the State of Gujarat, thus, works out of 21.20 lakhs as against which the State Government has identified 33.9 lakh BPL families. As such, it has not been possible to accede to the request of the Government of Gujarat.

Provision of foodgrains at concessional rates

†*734. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have fixed a target to provide foodgrains at concessional rates;

(b) if so, the method adopted for proper distribution of the same;

(c) whether it is also a fact that needy people fail to get foodgrains due to interference of middlemen and connivance of the officers; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to bring transparency in the system?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) Allocation of foodgrains for BPL families under the Public Distribution System (PDS) is being made at subsidised rates. The State-wise number of BPL families was initially based on the poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 applied to the population projections of 1995. With effect from 1.12.2000 the base was shifted to the population projections of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000. The total number of BPL families in the country is 6.52 crore.

(b) PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments. Whereas the procurement, allocation and distribution upto the Central godowns is done by the Central Government, the identification of beneficiaries, issue of ration cards and distribution of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

foodgrains to the beneficiaries through the network of FPSs in a transparent and accountable manner is carried out by the State Governments.

(c) and (d) Implementation of PDS involves multiple agencies of the Central and State Governments including 4.63 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPSs) in the country. In an operation of such a vast magnitude, some deficiencies cannot be ruled out. In order to make PDS more effective, efficient and accountable, the following measures have been taken:—

(I) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 was notified on 31.8.2001 under section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The salient features of the Order relate to

(i) proper identification of eligible families,
(ii) issue of ration cards,
(iii) licensing of fair price shops,
(iv) scale of issue and issue prices,
(v) distribution of essential commodities, and
(vi) monitoring.

Any contravention of the provisions of clauses 3, 4, 6 & 7 of the Order is punishable under section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(II) State Government have been requested to closely monitor PDS at the FPS and other levels and to make arrangements for distribution of PDS commodities in a transparent and accountable manner by involving Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in rural areas and local bodies in urban areas.

(III) A Model Citizens' Charter has been formulated and circulated for adoption by all States/U.Ts. in the country, as a measure of social audit.

Schemes for unorganised work force

*735. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any schemes to cater to the health and sanitation, housing, water supply and educational needs of the unorganised work force; and

(b) if so, the details regarding the number of unorganised workers, funds allotted for each scheme during the last three years, State-wise, categories-wise and year-wise?